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**AFGHANISTAN**

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# FACT SHEET

## Support to the Elections Process (STEP)

### OVERVIEW

The Support to the Elections Process (STEP) project provides technical assistance to increase the electoral capacity and improve electoral administration in Afghanistan. Technical assistance focuses on building the capacity of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to help support credible and legitimate voter registry and electoral processes. STEP national and international staff is embedded within the IEC and works on election preparations, operations and logistics, technical procedures development, and post-election sustainability.

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Support the long-term institutional development of the IEC through staff recruitment, training, budget and financial management assistance, communications and reporting, logistics, and other election administration processes
- Provide targeted expert technical assistance to the IEC for the implementation of credible and transparent electoral processes at the national and sub-national levels
- Support the establishment of a sustainable permanent voter registry and data center
- Enhance the ability of the IEC to implement outreach and recruitment activities to all Afghans
- Work with local non-governmental organizations to provide civic-education, and encourage participation in the election process with an emphasis on women
- Support the Elections Complaints Commission (ECC) with enhanced technical capacity to manage and process electoral complaints
- Work with the IEC to evaluate elections performance and increase its institutional capacity

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided technical assistance to the ECC to manage the review, investigation, and adjudication of 1,442 complaints in 2009 and approximately 3,000 cases for the 2010 parliamentary elections
- Helped establish election and voter registration call centers to receive and respond to more than four million calls to provide election related advice and administrative guidance to voters
- Established an election education center that provided election information and training to interested groups and conducted more than 250 sessions with approximately 3,000 female participants and 2,500 male participants
- Created an effective and successful civic and voter education project that included face-to-face sessions reaching 2.4 million Afghans in 33 provinces
- Provided expert election administrative support on election management and reporting, electoral regulations, candidate nomination procedures, translation services, outreach, and media programs
- Provided technical assistance on development of electoral fraud mitigation, polling, vote counting and electoral complaints procedures, campaign finance regulations, and media monitoring
- Provided information technology equipment, generators, furniture, and other supplies to ensure the functionality of IEC headquarters and provincial offices
- Supported the ECC through procedural design and training of staff in the management and processing of electoral complaints
- Established a security operations center at the IEC to coordinate security matters with various agencies during the election campaign process, on election day, and for post-election activities
- Deployed international legal and national specialists to support the work of the ECC for the 2010 parliamentary elections